

Application Serial No.: 09/774,177
Reply to Office Action dated December 15, 2003

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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-16. (Cancel)

17. (Currently Amended) A mat comprising:

at least one first layer of at least one strand formed of filaments that are at least partly opened; and

at least one second layer of at least one intact strand formed of filaments that are not opened,

wherein said at least one first layer is at least partly opened by subjecting the at least one first layer to a flow of fluid and wherein said at least partly opened at least one first layer and said at least one second layer are superposed.

18. (Currently Amended) A mat comprising:

at least one first layer of at least one strand formed of filaments that are at least partly opened; and

at least one second layer of at least one intact strand formed of filaments which are held together within the strand and are not opened,

wherein said at least one first layer has a filament dispersion gradient.

19. (Previously Presented) The mat according to Claim 18, wherein the at least one strand of the at least one first layer and the at least one strand of the at least one second layer are formed of filaments of at least one of a reinforcing material and an organic material.